PROVINCIAL VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS in BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Province of British Columbia
Ministry of Labour
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Programs and services provided by private, non-profit and public sector agencies for the vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons in British Columbia can be seen to comprise a comprehensive network. The provincial government contribution to this network is the subject of this paper. Some of the costs of the provincial services, approximately $24 million annually, are cost-shared with Canada under the authority of the Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act, 1961, and Agreement.

The terms of the Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Agreement of 1983, require each province signatory to the Agreement to submit to Health and Welfare Canada a comprehensive description and summary of provincial government activity in the vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. This paper will, in addition to fulfilling this requirement, serve as a reference for participants in the vocational rehabilitation network in British Columbia and provide a framework for discussions related to program development.

Persons may be disabled physically or mentally as a result of congential factors, accidents, stresses or illnesses. Vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities performs an economic as well as social function in enabling persons to contribute to the economy and to their community. The process of vocational rehabilitation is individualized in nature and interdisciplinary. It requires the cooperation of a network of private, non-profit and public sector rehabilitation workers to assist individuals to define and attain their vocational goal. This paper refers primarily to the role of the six provincial government ministries involved in this network and the provincial coordination of their efforts.

This paper recognizes that persons with a disability are the most important contributor to the outcome of the vocational rehabilitation process, while recognizing the effects of the environment, attitudes, economic and labour market conditions. Programs generally, and specific programs for individuals, must address these conditions. Planning and development of the provincial contribution to the network of services must respond to, and reflect, changes in the economic and social conditions in the province.

The description of the provincial program is divided into four major areas: an overview of the interlocking components of the vocational rehabilitation program; a description of each of the major elements of service, research and evaluation, and training and education; descriptions of the various cost-shared services and programs within the major elements; and references to the legislation within each ministry enabling the delivery of services.

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PROVINCIAL VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

INTRODUCTION

Vocational rehabilitation programs and services in British Columbia are founded on the principle that the goal of vocational rehabilitation is to assist the efforts of persons with disabilities to overcome barriers to securing, retaining and advancing in employment imposed as a result of disability.

Vocational rehabilitation is an economic, as well as a social policy vehicle, which recognizes the unique needs of persons with disabilities with respect to employment, and provides optimum opportunities for their participation in the community and the economy. Vocational rehabilitation enables a practical contribution to the economy by persons with disabilities through employment while decreasing social and health program expenditures. Employment fulfills a social function by providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and ability to contribute to the community.

Persons may be disabled mentally or physically as a result of congenital factors, accidents, stresses or illnesses. Vocational rehabilitation processes must respond to the varying requirements of each individual assessed as capable of benefitting vocationally from services.

By formal definition vocational rehabilitation is any process of restoration, training, employment placement, and related services, the object of which is to enable persons with disabilities to become capable of pursuing regularly a substantially gainful occupation. In practice, vocational rehabilitation means assessing individual requirements, establishing goals, determining appropriate services based on assessed requirements, and providing support to persons undertaking this process.

Using the network of services available in local communities throughout British Columbia, persons with disabilities participate in medical, social and vocational assessments, receive appropriate restorative services including technical aids and devices such as vehicle hand controls and special reading aids, participate in education and training programs and receive employment assistance or placement. Individuals are assisted in becoming increasingly independent in order to reach their vocational potential. A critical component of the process is the follow-up support provided to employers and persons newly placed in employment to ensure each individual is firmly established in their vocation.

In addition to the services provided to address the disabling condition of the individual, the vocational rehabilitation program must also provide adaptive measures necessary to provide access for persons with disabilities to regular services. As well as the regular components of vocational services, for example, the program must also provide assistance for persons with visual and hearing impairments to access training stations and library services in order to prepare for the labour market.

The contributors to the comprehensive program in the province are diverse and include persons with disabilities, service agencies, colleges, workshops, private industry and the provincial government.

The individual person with a disabling condition is the most important contributor to the success or failure of the vocational rehabilitation process, while recognizing the substantial influence of the general environmental, attitudinal, economic and labour market conditions in the province. The

medical and psychological condition, motivation, family, housing, transportation and economic circumstances of the individual all have a bearing on the outcome of the process. From a broader perspective, persons with disabilities are the "consumers" of the vocational rehabilitation program and are key advisors in the development of these services.

Agencies and institutions, such as G.F. Strong Rehabilitation Centre and Workers Compensation Board rehabilitation hospital, provide services designed to assist physically disabled persons to attain maximum function in order to enter or return to the work force. Associations such as CNIB, Canadian Paraplegic Association, Western Institute for the Deaf, Vancouver Neurological Center, Canadian Mental Health Association, Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Society, and others provide counselling and support services to help individuals adjust and cope with disabling conditions. These associations also arrange for assessment of individuals for the use of aids and devices, such as reading equipment, wheelchairs and interpreter services.

Colleges provide a broad range of access, coordinating and support services to enable persons with disabilities to gain admission, successfully engage in courses and prepare for occupations. Where required special programs are initiated such as career awareness, vocational exploration and work experience opportunities for persons with disabilities. Adult basic education and adult special education staff in the colleges form an integral part of the network of vocational rehabilitation practitioners in the province.

Workshops and achievement centers provide a range of assessment capacities as well as placement opportunities varying from therapeutic day activities to sheltered employment in production oriented centers. There are 79 centers located across

the province. The broad geographic distribution of these centres is a significant asset to the vocational rehabilitation network.

Industry, through research and development, provides improved assistive devices, lightweight, effective technical equipment and innovative computer devices to assist individuals to live and work independently. Industry also can play a role in the cooperative development of assessment and employment opportunities to capitalize on the potential of persons with disabilities.

The federal and provincial governments are major contributors to the comprehensive vocational rehabilitation program. In Canada, the provinces have jurisdictional responsibility for the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services while the federal government assists in supporting the costs of the provincial vocational rehabilitation programs for persons with disabilities. In British Columbia, the Office of the Provincial Coordinator of Vocational Rehabilitation in the Ministry of Labour, assists in coordinating the activities of six ministries which form the provincial contribution to the program. The ministries of Labour, Health, Education, Human Resources, and Universities, Science and Communications operate programs and services supporting vocational rehabilitation activities for persons with disabilities including mental illness, mental retardation, alcohol and drug dependency and physical disability. In recognition of the need to coordinate the diverse agencies of government involved in vocational rehabilitation, and the need to obtain "consumer" advice and expertise, the provincial government has established interministry and community advisory committees to provide advice and assistance to the Provincial Coordinator of Vocational Rehabilitation.

The federal government, under the Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Agreement, provides contributions toward some of the costs of the comprehensive vocational

rehabilitation program services provided through the provincial government to persons with disabilities.

The VRDP Agreement recognizes that the process of vocational rehabilitation involves a continuum of services to clients including early intervention with vocational rehabilitation services, counselling, restorative services or devices, training, education and job placement. The Agreement also recognizes the need for adequate training for service providers, for ongoing research and evaluation, and the development of resources to enhance and improve services.

It is noted that not all costs of the comprehensive program are shared by Health and Welfare Canada under the V.R.D.P. Agreement.

In British Columbia, we are seeking to ensure the existence of a comprehensive, coordinated vocational rehabilitation program, accessible to those who require it, comprised of all necessary services. To achieve this goal consideration is given to such factors as environmental barriers, labour market requirements, economic, health and social aspects, and current technological developments in planning and preparing for the future.

PROVINCIAL VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

There are a broad range of services required to provide a comprehensive program of vocational rehabilitation for persons with disabilities. The program developed with each individual is as unique as their disabilities and their abilities. The process of assessment, planning, restoration, education, training, placement and occupational stabilization typically involves several agencies and professionals collaborating to develop a coordinated program to meet the individual's requirements.

It is the unique requirements of the individual in attaining their vocational goal which presents the challenge in vocational rehabilitation. Often services must be adapted to permit access and use by the individual. Other services must be developed in the community in a specialized form to enable the successful vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. These services include supports such the public school special education services, programs operated by employers and service agencies supporting the vocational rehabilitation programs in the community, and services such as audiological testing and speech therapy necessary to prepare individuals for participation in other components of the vocational rehabilitation program.

This report does not attempt to describe the significant contribution of the non-profit and private sectors to the comprehensive vocational rehabilitation program in the province. Also, there are no references to the services provided through the Workers' Compensation Board, Veterans' Rehabilitation Act and Insurance Corporation of British Columbia as these, while providing a significant contribution to the provincial vocational rehabilitation network, are not within the scope of the provincial government's activity in relation to the Vocational Rehabilitation

of Disabled Persons Agreement. The provincial government contribution to the comprehensive program will be described in terms of three major areas: service, research and evaluation, and training and education.

The next section of this report describes the functions of the service, research and evaluation and training and education components, their objectives and goals and their role in the comprehensive vocational rehabilitation program. An explanation of the terms used in this document is attached as Appendix I.

The service component of the vocational rehabilitation program is the element which enables the individual to meet a vocational goal, and includes the range of activities from assessment, counselling, provision of assistive devices, training and education, placement and all other activities directed towards assisting the individual to achieve this goal.

The research and evaluation component includes private and public sector research in support of the vocational rehabilitation process of individuals, as well as in such areas as preventative programs, program and service evaluation, and the development of standards for staff training and accreditation of work projects and centres.

The training and education element of the provincial vocational rehabilitation program focuses on training and education programs for personnel providing services relating to disabled persons as well as public education programs concerning vocational rehabilitation issues.

1. SERVICE

i) Early Intervention

The objective of early intervention services is, through identification and early provision of services to persons with disabilities, to reduce vocationally handicapping conditions which result from disability.

A goal for the future is to improve our ability to provide early intervention for children with disabilities, persons disabled as a result of disease and accidents and persons with disabling dependencies on alcohol or drugs. This will result in improved service and an expected long-term saving in actual costs of vocational rehabilitation, social maintenance, and health care.

This goal will be addressed through coordination and cooperation among the ministries of Health, Human Resources, Education and Labour.

ii) Assessment

The objective of vocational assessment is to select, on the basis of the presence of a disabling condition and capacity for regularly pursuing a substantially gainful occupation, candidates to be tested medically, psychosocially and vocationally in preparation for acceptance as a client and development of a vocational rehabilitation plan.

Confirmation will be made of disability resulting from alcohol or drug abuse, physical impairment or mental impairment as well as identification of deficits in social and psychological functions requiring remedial or restorative treatment.

The vocational evaluation will include assessment of work habits, capability to acquire work skills and potential to develop attitudes and behaviours required for employment. Assessments may be performed through a variety of paper tests, interviews and observations of simulated and actual work situations.

Currently these services are provided by, or are purchased from private physicians, psychologists, hospitals, colleges, universities, private agencies, workshops, alcohol and drug treatment centres, mental health centres and government rehabilitation workers.

Ministries involved with clients undergoing assessment, and with funding assessment centres, include Health, Education, Human Resources and Labour.

iii) Counselling

The objective of vocational counselling is to assist clients to adjust to the disabling condition and the vocational rehabilitation process, to develop a vocational rehabilitation plan, to assess vocational options, to select and pursue objectives leading to a vocational goal and to prepare for, and adjust to, employment. Counselling services are provided throughout the vocational rehabilitation process and are essential to the effective selection and use of the other services which may be involved in the process.

These services include encouraging clients to evaluate their requirements and resources, develop a positive attitude, self-confidence and the desire to make a long-term commitment to attain productive employment. It may

involve counselling to determine potential fields of employment, choosing a vocational goal and setting both long and short-term objectives to achieve that goal. Another fundamental purpose of the counselling function is to assist the client to become progressively independent from rehabilitation supports.

Counselling may be provided by provincial rehabilitation consultants and counsellors, counsellors in private agencies, instructors and counsellors in the education system, non-profit organizations including groups representing persons with disabilities, direct service providers, alcohol and drug treatment counsellors, and counsellors in the mental health field.

Counselling services are provided through the ministries of Health, Education, Human Resources and Labour.

iv) Restorative Services and Devices

The objective of restorative services is to provide physical and mental restoration services and devices which will eliminate or reduce the disabling condition, and achieve optimal mental and physical functioning to enable the client to attain the objectives of their vocational rehabilitation plan.

To attain maximum vocational potential, individuals with disabilities require access to the most effective services and devices available. These may include corrective surgery, prosthetic and orthotic devices, dental and visual services and treatment for mental and emotional conditions to assist in their vocational rehabilitation.

Restoration services are accessed on behalf of clients through the ministries of Health, Provincial Secretary and Government Services, Human Resources and Labour.

Private agencies and government institutions contribute substantially to restorative services in British Columbia.

v) Training

The objective of vocational rehabilitation training is to provide appropriate training opportunities to persons with disabilities on the basis of medical, psycho-social and vocational testing, to fulfill the requirements of their vocational rehabilitation plan. The goal is for the individual to acquire skills which will enable them to qualify for an identified occupation.

Training may entail instruction in living skills to enable successful interaction with individuals and groups in preparation for further education and training. Training may also be directed towards a specific set of skills designed to enable the individual to directly fulfill occupational requirements. Work experience opportunities enable the individual and rehabilitation worker to evaluate vocational options, assess their own performance and potential as well as acquire job skills.

Training for individuals with disabilities is available through many sources, such as institutional training offered at provincial institutes and private trade schools, training in sheltered workshop settings and on-the-job experience at actual work sites.

Currently in British Columbia, these training resources are developed and funded by several government sources, including the provincial ministries of Labour, Education, Health, and Human Resources, and the federal Canada Employment programs.

A goal in the training component is to improve the match between vocational plans, training resources and employment opportunities in communities. Another goal is to develop innovative programs to encourage persons with disabilities to train in areas with projected increased labour force requirements such as tourism-related, skilled trades and high technology occupations. It is also acknowledged that programs must recognize the role that small business is anticipated to play as the major source of new jobs in the near and mid-term future.

vi) Education

The objective of the education component of the vocational rehabilitation program is to provide access to appropriate educational services required for persons with disabilities to develop their capacity to obtain an occupation. In recognition of this, the Ministry of Education has encouraged and supported the development of special education services and programs in public institutions. Individuals with disabilities are now able to upgrade their basic skills, participate in career exploration programs, and enroll in career training programs at several sites in the province.

In many educational settings, there is a network of support services to assist students with special needs. Coordinators, counsellors, instructors, attendants, special librarians and aides who provide assistance and support to enable persons with disabilities to participate in college sponsored programs contribute significantly to the vocational rehabilitation network.

The three provincial universities also provide support services to students with disabilities and vocational handicaps, through coordinating access to programs, providing learning aids and other necessary support services to enable students to participate in post-secondary programs.

Ministries contributing to vocational rehabilitation training and education opportunities include the ministries of Education, Human Resources, Universities, Science and Communications and Labour.

A significant number of training and education opportunities for persons with disabilities are provided through Canada Employment and Immigration Commission.

vii) Placement and Job Stabilization

The objective of job placement and job stabilization is to provide vocational assistance supporting efforts of clients in securing, retaining and advancing in appropriate occupations to fulfill the goal of their vocational rehabilitation plan.

The successful completion of the plan requires a range of occupational options from sheltered employment, home-

making and self-employment to competitive employment. Employment may be achieved by the individual's own efforts or through the services provided by Canada Employment Centres, specialized job search coordinators, staff in educational institutions, and agencies. The use of job search coordinators and "job club" services have proven to be highly successful. Follow up support services, to ensure a smooth introduction to the work-place, assistance in learning skills and adjusting to employment must be available both to new employees and to employers on a continuing basis, and should be provided as an extension to the placement service.

Ministries involved in job placement activities include Health, Education, Provincial Secretary and Government Services, Human Resources and Labour.

Canada Employment Special Needs Counsellors working closely with local vocational rehabilitation personnel, provide such assistance in some areas of the province in placement of persons with disabilities.

viii) Resource Development

The objective of resource development is to ensure effective vocational rehabilitation services are available to respond to the unique requirements of persons with disabilities in support of their vocational rehabilitation plan. Resource development occurs on national, regional, provincial and local levels.

It is anticipated that it will be necessary in the future to develop regional and national resources in Canada to meet the specialized training and education

needs of certain disability groups such as the hearing impaired. A responsive and flexible system of sharing in costs of these resources will be necessary through cooperation by the provincial and federal representatives.

On local levels, resources are developed through cooperative efforts and disabled persons, agencies, colleges and a range of government rehabilitation workers in response to the requirements of the vocational rehabilitation process and particular needs and opportunities in communities in the province. A major goal is the future development of assessment, counselling, training and job placement resources to ensure required services and programs are available for clients in their home communities, and which are appropriate for the training and employment opportunities of that area of the province.

ix) Management, Administration and Coordination

The objective of management, administration and coordination activities is to provide communication between persons with disabilities, service delivery, management, financial, policy and program development staff to ensure the effective coordination of the service delivery, training and research activities of the comprehensive vocational rehabilitation program. Committees are in place, or are being developed, at the federal/provincial, interprovincial, interministry and community levels to assist with coordination of the vocational rehabilitation program in the province.

In British Columbia, central coordination of the provincial vocational rehabilitation program is provided through the Office of the Provincial Coordinator of Vocational Rehabilitation and the InterMinistry Advisors group which provides policy and program development recommendations and consultative services within government. This committee is comprised of representatives of Labour, Education, Health, Human Resources, Universities, Science and Communication and the Provincial Secretary and Government Services, as well as line managers of specific services.

Use of this committee, with representation from service delivery, management and executive level staff, ensures coordination in developing programs, services and administration. It also ensures that issues having a wide impact, such as training, transportation and accessibility, are addressed in a manner which permits input and participation from all parties.

The Provincial Coordinator also chairs the Training Selection Committee comprised of the Provincial Coordinator, and representatives of the Ministry of Education and C.E.I.C. responsible for review of all training and related services for individual clients. This Committee also provides a forum for discussion of vocational rehabilitation program requirements and resource development.

A Community Advisors group is being formed to establish a device for consultation with persons of merit knowledgeable of disabilities and vocational rehabilitation. This group will perform a significant role in undertaking to provide community perspective on matters

relating to vocational rehabilitation and the coordination of services.

2. RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

i) Research

An objective of vocational rehabilitation research is to provide a base of information to guide and support the development of policy and the service delivery, research and training activities of the comprehensive program. A further objective is to enable disabled persons, service agencies and researchers to jointly develop appropriate aids and adaptations to respond to the requirements of the vocational rehabilitation process.

Little coordinated research is currently undertaken in Canada in the area of vocational rehabilitation. In British Columbia, the University of British Columbia, the Interministry Advisors Group and representatives of private agencies have together developed a proposal for a Vocational Rehabilitation Research Coordination Centre (VRRCC).

This centre is proposed to bring together in a community-based forum disabled persons, agency representatives and researchers to address needs in all areas of the vocational rehabilitation process. The VRRCC, when developed, will contribute significantly to the vocational rehabilitation program in the province.

The ministries of Health, Labour and Universities, Science and Communication are actively involved in vocational rehabilitation-related research.

ii) Evaluation

The objective of program evaluation is to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of the comprehensive vocational rehabilitation program, its components, policies, procedures and outcomes. Evaluation is undertaken on two levels: the evaluation of specific programs and services, and systems evaluation.

Through evaluation teams located in various government organizations, evaluations of specific government programs or program elements are undertaken, to determine the appropriateness and effectiveness of the services provided. Development of service systems and standards of delivery are undertaken at an interministerial level in cooperation with professional organizations and service delivery staff. Program development exists in many government branches and large organizations. Program development units offer services such as resource, curriculum and program development, as well as assisting to establish evaluation targets and to analyze information. Currently such resources exist in the ministries of Health, Labour, Universities, Science and Communication, and Human Resources.

3. TRAINING & EDUCATION

i) Staff Training

The objective of staff training is to develop and maintain a network of skilled practitioners to assist persons with disabilities to derive maximum benefit from the comprehensive vocational rehabilitation program. This involves the thorough training of staff in the

skills applicable to each phase of the vocational rehabilitation process as well as training in the overall process and network of resources involved. In addition, a continuing education and training program is required to maintain currency of knowledge in this evolving field which is significantly influenced by the increasingly technologically sophisticated environment.

A goal for the future is to significantly improve this component of the program. The requirements for adequately trained vocational rehabilitation practitioners have been clearly outlined in studies such as the "Need for University Level Education in Vocational Rehabilitation Counselling in Canada" by Margaret Lewis. Recommendations have been made for national level support of programs in vocational rehabilitation including a university-based program for Western Canada to provide a skilled body of qualified vocational rehabilitation practitioners.

With the assistance of the major service organizations and associations such as the Canadian Association of Rehabilitation Personnel (CARP), continuing education, training and up-grading resources should be developed and available to all practitioners in the vocational rehabilitation field.

ii) Education

The objective of vocational rehabilitation education is to provide information to the public which encourages a positive and receptive attitude towards persons with disabilities and their vocational rehabilitation. A program of public education has proven to be an

effective way to disseminate information to the general public and special interest groups. As demonstrated by the campaign undertaken during the International Year of Disabled Persons, increased awareness of issues affecting disabled persons, such as vocational rehabilitation, education, physical accessibility and transportation can result in improvements in attitude and employment prospects for persons with disabilities.

Each component of each program area described in this document provide an interlocking part of the comprehensive coordinated vocational rehabilitation program in British Columbia. As such, the provincial government contribution and future development of the program contributing to this overall program, in our view, should be recognized and supported under the terms of the Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Agreement. A compendium of the specific programs currently operated within each program area is attached as Appendix 2. This list does not preclude the cost-sharing of any program or service not appearing herein.

NEW DEVELOPMENT

The provincial government has established interministry and community advisory committees to provide advice and assistance in planning and preparing for the future development of the comprehensive vocational rehabilitation program in British Columbia. These advisors, in consultation with provincial government staff, government and independent rehabilitation counsellors and consultants, and C.E.I.C. representatives, assist in determining vocational rehabilitation needs and recommending priorities for services and new resources.

Vocational rehabilitation services are delivered in an environment subject to continuous change. The effects of changes in the economic, labour market and social conditions must be assessed and adapted to in the development of policy and programs. Rapid developments in technology affect the resources available to assist rehabilitation workers and have significantly enhanced the survival of persons with disabilities. The development of professional standards of service, and changing methodologies of service delivery and the addition of new services for persons with disabilities, add to the complex evolutionary nature of the vocational rehabilitation field.

In this changing environment, the organization of services must respond to the changing requirements of persons with disabilities and rehabilitation workers.

Potential areas of new development may include, for example, regional assessment and rehabilitation centers, to improve assessment and service capability for individuals which will be more appropriate to requirements of communities. Assessment, training and employment options such as sheltered employment enterprises, work enclaves in the private sector, projects within

industry and specialized workshops are also potential areas of new development, and may be undertaken to ensure adequate and appropriate resources exist to meet the vocational rehabilitation requirements for persons with disabilities in British Columbia.

To ensure the most effective use is made of available resources in this changing environment, advice is sought through community and interministry advisory groups in the preparation and revision of a coordinated plan for the development of the vocational rehabilitation program in the province.

APPENDIX I

Definitions

Disabled Person: means a person who, because of a physical or mental impairment, has substantially reduced prospects of securing, retaining and advancing in employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation: means any process of assessment, counselling, restoration, training, education or employment placement, including services related thereto, the object of which is to enable persons with disabilities to secure, retain and advance in suitable employment and thereby to further that person's integration or re-integration into society.

Substantially Gainful Employment: means employment in the competitive labour market, the practive of a profession, self-employment, home-making, farm work, work where payment is 'in kind' rather than in cash, sheltered employment, home industry or other work of a remunerative nature.

Service: means goods and services provided through intervention, assessment, counselling, restorative service, education, training, job placement, job stabilization and the administration, management and coordination of these services.

Training: means activities to develop maintain and advance skills of persons contributing to the program in order to effectively assist persons with disabilities to derive maximum benefit from the comprehensive vocational rehabilitation program.

Education: means activities to apprise the public of vocational rehabilitation goals, services and programs to improve attitudes and employment prospects for persons with disabilities.

Research and Evaluation: means activities to provide a base of information to guide and support the development of the comprehensive vocational rehabilitation program. It includes activities to enable persons with disabilities, service providers and researchers to jointly develop appropriate aids and adaptations to meet the requirements of the vocational rehabilitation process.

APPENDIX II

Vocational Rehabilitation Programs and Services
In British Columbia

I. SERVICES

A. Ministry of Labour

1. Management/Coordination/Administration

The functions cost-shared within this section include the Office of the Provincial Coordinator, the Finance and Administration financial control functions, and the staff of the Apprenticeship and Employment Training Programs Branch.

2. Vocational Rehabilitation Service

Rehabilitation Consultants of the V.R.S. are responsible for delivery of comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services, including intake, assessment, referral, counselling, restorative aids and services, development of training and education opportunities, assistance in placement and consulting with agencies on the development of vocational rehabilitation resources.

Clients of the V.R.S. are persons with physical or mental disabilities, who, at intake, are assessed as not capable of pursuing regularly a substantially gainful occupation.

3. Funded Agencies

The V.R.S. provides funding to many agencies within the province to provide support services, including:

a) Canadian National Institute for the Blind - Vancouver

Two Vocational Employment Counsellors provide a range of services including assessment, employment counselling, job placement assistance and community resource development for visually impaired persons.

b) Canadian Paraplegic Association - Vancouver

A Native Vocational Rehabilitation Counsellor provides vocational assessment, counselling and referral services for disabled natives throughout the province.

c) Goodwill Enterprises for the Handicapped - Victoria

A Rehabilitation Team at Goodwill operates an assessment, training and counselling program and provides referrals for other services.

d) Mann & Simpson Associates - Vancouver

Mann and Simpson Associates, under contract with the VRS, will develop an assessment and work adjustment program for head-injured clients.

e) Mt. Pleasant Community Workshop - Vancouver

The Workshop operates an assessment service and a Building Service Worker Program to provide training, practical work experience and job placement assistance in the building service worker field.

f) Rehabilitation Counsellors - Terrace, Prince Rupert, Langley

Rehabilitation Counsellors, under contract through non-profit agencies with the VRS, provide counselling, assessment, job placement and job stabilization services to support the local VRS Rehabilitation Consultant. Agencies providing these services are Terrace and District Community Services, Prince Rupert Community Enrichment Society and one independent Rehabilitation Counsellor in Langley municipality.

g) Richmond Opportunity Workshop - Richmond

The Rehabilitation Counsellor provides vocational assessment services, exploration of vocational choices and vocational counselling.

h) Surrey Rehabilitation Society - Surrey

The Surrey Rehabilitation Assessment Team project will improve vocational rehabilitation employment opportunities through researching the local employment market, developing appropriate work samples, assessments and undertaking specialized community job placement.

i) Vancouver General Hospital Work Adjustment Program - Vancouver

This program provides opportunities for clients to participate in a work adjustment program, using actual work stations within the hospital.

g) Western Institute for the Deaf - Vancouver, Victoria

This agency provides a comprehensive program for persons with hearing impairments, including assessment, audiological testing, vocational counselling, interpreter services and job placement assistance.

4. Training and Employment Programs

a) Personal Placement Training Program

This program funds provincial ministries to provide training opportunities, appropriate to their vocational rehabilitation plan, for persons with disabilities.

b) Training Program for Disabled Persons

This is a wage subsidy program which shares equally with employers, the salary costs for training and employment opportunities developed for persons with disabilities. Under certain circumstances, registered non-profit employers may receive full funding for salary costs. Subsidies are available for up to one year, depending on the training provided and in consideration of the abilities of the trainees.

B. Ministry of Health

1. Management/Coordination/Administration

The Federal Provincial Cost Sharing Unit within Financial Services of the Ministry of Health is responsible for preparing Records of Approval and claims for reimbursement under the V.R.D.P. Agreement.

2. Alcohol & Drug Programs

a) The Executive Director and Regional Managers provide overall direction to the vocational rehabilitation components of the Alcohol and Drug Programs.

b) Funded Agencies - There are approximately 50 independently operated agencies and a further 20 direct service units throughout the province which provide services to persons disabled through alcohol and/or drug abuse. These agencies provide detoxification services, a range of residential programs based on a psycho/social model, and outpatient counselling services. All focus upon employment as a key component to recovery.

c) Outpatient Clinics - These clinics provide counselling, rehabilitation and employment related services to persons disabled through abuse of alcohol or other drugs.

3. Mental Health Programs

a) Burnaby Day Programs - Burnaby Day Programs provide an integrated and comprehensive urban program of psychiatric resources for adults

and children, focussing on occupational and social rehabilitation programs.

b) Greater Vancouver Mental Health Services - This agency, through community based teams, provides counselling, treatment and vocational rehabilitation services to emotionally disturbed adults and their families.

c) Mental Health Centres - Thirty mental health centres throughout the province provide a range of services including restorative services for mental health disabilities for adults and children, professional consultative programs and special care, such as establishing special group homes, etc. Through provision of these services clients are able to stabilize their lives, establish employment and life goals, and enter, or return to, gainful employment.

d) Achievement Centres - Achievement Centres providing services to mental health patients were recently transferred to the Ministry of Health from the Ministry of Human Resources.

4. Speech and Hearing Division

Speech and hearing restorative services are provided to disabled persons through this division to enable vocational rehabilitation clients to pursue their vocational goals.

5. Therapeutic Work Program

This program provides meaningful work, training, rehabilitation and support services to chronically mentally ill persons. Focussing on adult chronic psychiatric patients who also have significant vocational and social disabilities. The program is delivered through community agencies in close cooperation with community mental health workers and assessment teams.

6. General Grants Program

This program, administered through Executive Services of the Deputy Minister's office, funds a wide range of community agencies to deliver services in the areas of rehabilitation, education, treatment and prevention to enhance established health programs. Some of these projects provide vocational rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities.

7. Riverview

Riverview provides assessment, counselling, vocational and rehabilitation programs designed to restore individuals to a capability for independent living and to return then to the community as homemakers, for sheltered employment or re-entry into the competitive labour market.

C. Ministry of Education

1. Management/Coordination/Administration

The central office management, administration and coordination functions within the Ministry of Education contribute significantly to the effective operation of post-secondary services for persons with disabilities. A ministry representative sits on the Training Selection Committee for the province.

2. Colleges Program

Colleges throughout the province provide a range of services to disabled persons, including intake, assessment, referral, counselling and specialized

training programs for disabled students. Programs have been specifically developed to meet the needs of disabled persons regionally, provincially and in response to particular training and education needs of certain disability groups such as persons with hearing impairments, mental disabilities and physical disabilities. Services are provided to enable persons with disabilities to access appropriate resources within the colleges in order to undertake their training and education.

Ministry staff provide expertise in the analysis of requirements of persons with disabilities, curriculum and program development to meet these requirements and assist with coordination and administration of vocational rehabilitation programs and services across colleges from a provincial perspective.

D. Ministry of Universities, Science and Communications

This Ministry indirectly funds, through the Universities Council of British Columbia who allocate the funds to their identified program areas. The universities make every effort to offer equal access to enable students with disabilities to attain their vocational goals.

E. Ministry of Human Resources

It is recognized that the programs, described below are cost-shared under the Canada Assistance Plan. These programs are often essential to the success of vocational rehabilitation plans for individuals with disabilities.

1. Management/Coordination/Administration

The Federal-Provincial Agreements Division and the Canada Assistance Plan Accounting Division are responsible for negotiating and claiming cost sharing with the Federal Government.

The costs of administration, financial assistance and social services which are provided through the Guaranteed Available Income for Need Act (G.A.I.N.) are cost shared to the extent that they comply with the Canada Assistance Plan.

2. Benefits

The following benefits are available to a handicapped person involved in a vocational rehabilitation process if the person is eligible to receive income assistance:

a) payment of essential costs related to educational or vocational upgrading (fees and expenses) and income assistance benefits if:

   i) the person is already in receipt of income assistance

   ii) the upgrading prepares the person for a specific type of employment

   iii) the program is of less than 2 years duration

   iv) an Individual Opportunity Plan has been negotiated and established prior to the commencement of the individual's participation

   v) all other sources of assistance have been investigated and found to be unavailable

b) Travel allowance to Achievement Centres
c) Guide dog allowances for the blind and deaf
d) Transportation to confirmed job interview
e) Transportation to confirmed job
f) Transportation for local job search
g) Subsidized bus passes
h) Clothing required to procure employment
i) Day care subsidies

3. Health Services

Health Care benefits are provided under the G.A.I.N. Act in order to maintain or restore the health of persons found eligible under the G.A.I.N. Act Regulations. Health care benefits are granted in such a way that the individual's capacity for self-determination and independence is maintained, strengthened or restored. The type and amount of benefit granted reflect what is allowable under the provisions of the G.A.I.N. Act Regulations and policy. The benefits which are outlined below would be available to a person in a vocational rehabilitation process if other sources of assistance such as V.R.S. have been investigated and found to be unavailable:

a) Medical Services Plan of B.C. Coverage
b) Basic and special dental services
c) Basic and special optical services
d) Hearing aids and associated services
e) Mobility aids and specialized equipment such as wheelchairs, hoyer lifts, van or car lifts, portable ramps and elevating devices for the home and prosthetic appliances
f) Therapeutic medications through pharmacare
g) Orthotics

4. Services

The Ministry of Human Resources assists recipients to become independent of income assistance through employment. The mechanism is the Individual Opportunity Plan which provides clients with a continuum of resources to support their efforts to independence. Services which are an integral part of the IOP are assessment, planning, referral, supportive counselling and coordination of services. The effective use of community resources and the services offered by other ministries are also integral to the IOP.

5. Training

a) Subsidization of Achievement Centres for the handicapped

b) Job Action (teaching recipients to prepare for and obtain an interview and a job

c) Employment Initiatives for the Handicapped. This program enhances the employment or socialization opportunities for persons in receipt of G.A.I.N. for Handicapped benefits. Clients receive work experience placements for up to 12 months and receive an allowance of up to $50 per month from the Ministry of Human Resources to cover program related costs.

d) Purchase of work activity projects from non-profit societies. These projects combine life skills training, educational upgrading, counselling and work experience. The Ministry funds 2 projects providing services to handicapped persons (Laurel Enterprises in Victoria and the Kitsilano Work Activity Project in Vancouver) under the provisions of Section 3 of the Canada Assistance Plan (C.A.P.).

APPENDIX III

Ministry of Education

Colleges & Institutes Act
Schools Act
Ministry Policy circular - Continuing Education
Ministry Policy circular - Adult Special Education
Ministry Policy circular - Adult Basic Education

Ministry of Health

Mental Health Act and Regulation
Health Act

Ministry of Human Resources

GAIN Act and Regulations
Human Resources Facilities Act

Ministry of Labour

Apprenticeship Act
Memorandum of Understanding for the operation of the Personal Placement Program

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Copies of these documents are available upon request.

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